

Multi-cultural Day brings tastes of world to local Navy



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PORT HUENEME, Calif.— Six hundred people paitently waited in the warm morning sun at Bolles Field here Aug. 29, to get a taste of what the numerous cultures represented at Multi-cultural Day had to offer. The 9th annual Multi-Cultural Day offered a variety of food, music and culture, ranging from Louisiana red beans and rice to Jamaican jerk chicken, and from Native American corn salad to African American hot links, all of which are fairly abundant in the United States. Attendees were also introduced to Swedish fondue, Mexican fruit and hearts of palm salad, Mexican pastries, international coffees and more.

Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) Chief Staff Officer, Capt. Robert J. Westberg welcomed everyone to the event and talked about the importance of diversity in the United States. “America is great because it is a big melting pot. It’s the differences in culture that spice it up. We can all learn from each other,” he said.

That is what Multi-Cultural Day is all about. Not only is it an opportunity to share the cultures of the numerous countries represented in the United States, but it’s also a time to learn a little about the cultures represented right here at NBVC. Aside from the great food offered at Multi-Cultural Day, attendees also received an ear and eyeful of the music and dance traditions from several cultures.

The backdrop for the stage represented this year’s theme “Dancing to a Different Drum – Unity in Motion 2002.” It was a freehand painting of three individuals dancing taken from a small graphic used on the ‘passports’ the patrons used to visit each booth. BU1 Kelly Reno, a planning and estimation instructor at Naval Construction Training Center, who is a Multi-cultural Day committee member volunteered to paint the artwork. Reno said it took her five hours to paint the stage background. “What better way to spend a day at work?,” she said.

Multi-Cultural Day is one of many events organized by the Equal Employment Opportunity Council and its subcommittees. The Multi-cultural Day committee would like to say thanks to everyone who assisted in making this year’s event a success.



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Top left: (left to right) Shawna Clay, Joe Diaz, Mati Waiya and Mona Gonzales perform a Chumash Indian blessing at the start of the event.

Top Center: patrons stand in line, waiting for a taste of the fine cuisine offered at the Jamaican booth.

Top right: Dwine Knott grills jerk chicken.

Bottom Right: The Asian-Pacific American representative accepts a trophy. The APAC booth was one of the top three selections of the day. The Jamaican booth and the Puerto Rico booth received were also selected.

Bottom center: Natasya Catasikaris performs a belly-dance routine on stage.